

"Dear Mr. President", New York, New York, January or February 1942

AFS 6411A

Cut A1

David Helfeld: Yes, I think I . . . Well speaking from the viewpoint of a City College student it's very obvious how the war has affected us. This term sixty-one percent of the students enrolled as tech men, only thirty-nine percent in the various courses in liberal arts and science college. Obviously, our society is tending toward a technocracy and very obviously those boys who are twenty will either have to give up their studies or hurry them up. It seems to me that the degree is going to be cheapened. And within two and a half years you're going to get the same diploma that took you four years to get in the previous times. And it seems to me that these students in this college are responding very finely to the war effort, the college's war effort and the total war effort of the country. *[Interviewer speaks softly in the background]* Well, what do you want me to say?

David Helfeld: Dear Mr. President, my name is David Helfeld. I live 3604 31st Avenue, Long Island City. I happen to have the honor to be the president of the student council, College of the City of New York. I'm only nineteen now and I have a year before I graduate. Before I become twenty, I intend to join the army. But there's just one thought I'd like to get across to you. It's a feeling which horrifies all the boys at our college. And that is Negro discrimination in the army and in the navy. It seems to me to be an example, a very horrible example, of fascism within democracy.

When we here at the college hear that there are Negro, that there are Negro, purely Negro regiments and that Negroes are only allowed to do slop duty on the battle ships of our navy. It makes us feel very bad. We here realize that there are three wars to be fought. The physical war against the fascist nations — Germany, Italy, and Japan, and the war from within against anti-Semitism, Jim Crow, and factors of that nature. We feel that as long as we have fascism at home it is rather futile to fight it on the outside if we are not at the same time fighting it from within. I thank you for listening. *[long pause]* Besides the two wars I've just mentioned I feel that there is a third war, a very important one, namely the war to make a proper peace. Peace which will do away with all wars in the future.

Cut A2

Charles Atlas: My dear Mr. President, my name is Charles Atlas and I reside at 930 DeCalve Avenue in Brooklyn. I was born in Canada and I've been a resident of the United States for the past twelve years. The message I wish to convey is one that has been called to my attention by numerous friends of mine who are at present active members of the United States Armed Services. Many of these



fellows have obtained furlough only to find that financial difficulties have prevented them from visiting their friends and the people they love. I therefore deem it quite important that all members of the Armed Forces of the United States should be granted free communication and free traveling during furloughs. Furthermore, as an adjunct to this, I believe they should be given free mailing privileges to keep in communications with one's home and friends, will heighten the morale of every member of the Armed Services. Thank you.

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